GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:544
ANSWERED ON:12.04.2017
Satellite Transponders
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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the requirement for satellite transponders is increasing day by day with increase in demand for high definition channels and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recommended sharing of back-end infrastructure between satellite TV service distributors to help them cut their costs of operations and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to allow sharing of satellite transponders and earth station facilities by a DTH operator with other DTH players and distribution platforms and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the extent to which the sharing of transponders is likely to address the demand-supply mismatch and reduce both capital and operating expenditure of the companies and spur competition?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
(SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *544 FOR ANSWER ON 12.04.2017

(a) As intimated by Department of Space (DoS), the requirement of satellite transponder capacity for Direct-to-Home (DTH) services has been increasing with increase in demand for High Definition (HD) channels. The total satellite transponder capacity used by the DTH operators presently stands at 104 transponders. The growth of usage of satellite transponders by DTH service providers in India over the last five years is given below:

Date 03/2013 03/2014 03/2015 03/2016 03/2017
Satellite transponders (36 MHz equivalent) in use for DTH 76 77 78 87 104

Further, as on date there is a committed demand from the DTH service providers for 68 more transponders.

(b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has issued recommendations on sharing of Infrastructure in Television broadcasting distribution sector on 29.03.2017. These recommendations are available on TRAI's website www.trai.gov.in. The objectives of these recommendations are to enable a policy environment for facilitating sharing of infrastructure in TV broadcasting distribution sector, on voluntary basis. The sharing of the infrastructure is expected to enhance available distribution network capacities leading to reduction in capital & operative expenditure for the service providers thereby bringing down the price of broadcasting services to subscribers. In addition, it would lower the entry barriers for new service providers and provide more space on broadcasting distribution networks for niche channels.

(c) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has not received any proposal from DTH operators for sharing of satellite transponders and earth station facilities with other DTH players and distribution platforms.

(d) Currently all the DTH operators uplink the signals of TV channels to different satellites located at different orbital slots. Majority of the channels transmitted by operators are replicated across multiple platforms. This creates capacity constraints and also is a significant cost for each operator, thus making the service expensive. In this scenario, enabling sharing of infrastructure may address the issue of demand supply mismatch of transponder capacity and reduce capital and operating expenditure of the service provider.
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